

**TIMOTHY CHYME
IN
MAJIXLAND
PART ONE**



**BY
DONALD HARRY ROBERTS**

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THERE ONCE WAS A LAD NAMED TIMOTHY CHYME
WHO WENT DOWN A HOLE THAT CHANGED SPACE AND TIME
WHERE REALITY'S VEIL SWITCHED WITH FANTASY'S MASK
AND THE YOUNG BOY SET UPON A GROWN MAN'S TASK

There once was an old Hobo who lived in a cozy little caboose under a tree in the old railyard down the street and around the corner from Grampa Will's house....who was in fact an old....very old friend of the Hobo whose name was Strebor Nod.

Grampa Will had a cache of stories to tell, "A head full of yarn." Some said, but then they had forgotten everything there was ever to know about being in the magic world of childhood. Grampa Will got old enough to remember that fantastic world nestled in the minds of the young. "Damn shame we gotta go through adult hood." Grampa Will said often, usually just before he set off on one of his wonderful yarns. But listen up.....

This story begins in the summer, well the last day of spring in the grand year of nineteen and sixty two on the 20th day of June...a Wednesday and Timothy Chyme's 11th birthday and a little over a week before school let out for the summer. It is important to keep this day accurate because it was the only day of the year Timothy could go visit his very...very old friend Strebor Nod...the Hobo...but this particular day was even more special. But before I continue I must tell a smaller story about Timothy and his Grampa Will.

It happened two years before when G. Will decided it was time his Grand Son should learn how to jump a train and to meet the old Hobo for the first time who had taught grampa Will how to jump on and off a freight train.

"It's all about timing kid and makin sure the train ain't goin too fast cause if it is yer gonna get mushed and probably dead. Ya gotta get to a place where the train is almost stopped and jump onto the deck of the freight car with all your might. It ain't easy but even shortuns like yerself can manage it. I was even smaller than you kiddo.....but like Strebor Nod helped me I'll help you the first couple of times til ya get the hang of it....And jumpin off is the same....make sure the train is going real slow and make sure you are not gonna jump off and hit something....like a post or another train or....whatever.....

It took me nine jumps to get up on the car deck all by myself and a ton of bruises jumping off til I got that right,,, but by the end of it all I could do it like a pro and sometimes after that Gramps and I would jump a train and take off for a day....Gramps was a Hobo himself back in the dirty thirties.

Once we went up to see the old coal and silver mines which I will tell you now are important places in these Yarnish adventures...

Now back to June 20th 1962 and a fateful reunion with Timothy's Hobo Friend....Strebor Nod.

For the sake of a visual concept Strebor Nod looked something like a cross between a dwarf and a troll clad in a worn out tux with tails and a black top hat faded a redish brown. He carried with him a staff of hemlock....according to himself.

Now to the untrained eye and the eyes of those who have forgotten about the magic of the world the train yard was a desolate abandoned place and the old weather tortured caboose...mostly grey but once red.... sat in quiet despair on two rusted rails neath an equally decrepit elm tree. And a sad site it would seem to the unseeing. But to the likes of Grampa Will and....Timothy Chyme everything was in perfect shape....order and repair.....on that last day of spring and the first day of summer.

The sun was just coming over the horizon when Timothy Chyme slipped out the back door of the family's big old Edwardian monstrosity of a house. It was a school day but Timothy would not be attending and in those days that meant avoiding getting caught playing hooky by the Truant Officer...which I suppose these days is something that belongs back in the good old days.....

Out the door and down the street....running as fast as he could.....a turn right then straight ahead for several blocks then a left and quick right and two more blocks to the old...rusting train-swing bridge that crossed the mighty Trent River...then straight on to a back street that fed traffic into the yard of the old cotton mill...then a right along the then...still dirt road to the train yard.....What grand journey it was knowing that at the end the old Hobo Strebor Nod was waiting for him. As he drew near he could see a tendril of smoke rising from the chimney protruding from the roof of the caboose....which on that morning stood out bright and red and brand spanking new.....such is the way of magic....if you let it be.

Much to Timothy's delight Grampa Will was there brewing coffee over an open fire and had sausages cooking in an old griddle set on the coals. There was the aroma of fresh bread wafting across the train yard seeping into Timothy's nostrils. His 11th birthday was already turning out to be the best birthday ever....and he knew it was only going to get better because he and Grampa Will and Strebor Nod were going to jump the north bound train that would pass at 6 am 0'clock...sharp...A train that would take them to...."A very special place." According to Gramps and the Hobo.

It was just on 5 when Timothy joined the Hobo and Gramps. Strebor Nod smiled and regarded his railroad pocket watch. "On time. It is a good way to start your new year." He greeted cheerfully.

"I think that is good for us but not so good for the teachers and the truant officer." Replied Timothy...a little doubtful.

"I would not concern yourself with such trivial matters today my boy." Said Grampa Will who always seemed to know things before Timothy did or never figured out at all. Timothy smiled and forgot about school and the trouble he might get into later.

"Now come on eat while there is time before the train arrives.....and remember we have to pack up too." The Hobo cheered on.

Strebor was....as is usual for hobos....already to go in keeping with the situation. Timothy was ready long before the train chugged in. On the other hand Grampa Will just watched and waited and when the train did finally roll in ...its black coal smoke puffing out the stack... Timothy Chyme came to understand his Grandfather would not be joining them on this trip...."I have had my time...now the time is yours Timothy." He announced cheerfully....."There is a world of wonders out there where you are going that only a very....very few ever experience. Remember the tales I have told you because they were not just figments of my imagination.....They are history.....my history as you will grow your own history" He added with a huge laugh then turned and started for home.

The train slowed to a mere crawl and quick as a wink Strebor Nod hopped onto a flatbed....and directly behind came Timothy Chyme....though his size caused him to take more effort to accomplish the leap and he landed with a bump on his haunches.

"You did a site better than your old Grampa son. He landed hands and knees first and scraped them up raw." Strebor Nod Chortled.

"My butt is sure to be bruised." Timothy countered with a gripe and a groan and rubbed his butt.....gently.

The world looked different to Timothy riding along at 25 miles an hour on a flatbed railcar. If he did not move his head it blurred by....If he did move his head it vanished behind and staring forward everything began small and grew then vanished behind

.. No matter what the perspective not one angle was the same as another. He final asked the Hobo.... "Why are things so different on the train?"

Strebor nod smiled...it was an understanding smile. He answered...."Motion is a strange thing kid. Nothing ever stays the same....but be warned...you ain't seen nothing yet....Wait til we get to the mine.....a very special mine that few have ever seen the way you will...you and your Grampa....."

"Grampa talks a lot about things like the Adit to Silver Spur and Cordova and the long dark tunnel and the sparkling walls at a village he calls Midway Point. He said it is where old miners go and where travellers change up....but it is best you find out that stuff for yourself...It is a little different for everyone.....It depends on the state of your perspective and imagination..."

A column of deep gray smoke spewed from the engine's stack as the train chugged northward. Such a sight had not been seen in years but no one seemed to notice its passing and oddly they came across not a single road crossing.

"Are we....Is this train real?"

The Hobo grinned and replied. "As real as me Timothy Chyme."

Timothy scratched his head then looked up at the sky... "Are clouds real or just figments a nature's imagination?" He pondered.

The train chugged north with a speed that was once miraculous but was now little more than puttering along. It seemed to take for ever to travel just a few miles but at the same time Timothy was surprised when they did arrive and the journey was done.....

“Where are we.....this does not look quite right.....I mean....it looks.....way out of time or something.” Timothy said whimsically.

“You are going to have to grasp an entirely different perspective of time....and space my boy.....The way you think of them now belongs in the mundane world where majik and adventure....true adventure does not exist outside the flat imagination of hard core realists.” Replied Strebor Nod.

“We walk from here Timothy Chyme. There is an Adit not too far from here where the first gold mine of Cordova Mines was discovered. But what history seems to have forgotten something else....of the most incredible nature was discovered....a little later and not by gold mongers....by me in fact....on a cold stormy night while I was looking for a refuge from the weather.....”

“What is an Adit?”

“It is an opening to a mine and in this case a gateway to something most incredible....and....well....you will see when we get there.

Timothy looked about and marvelled at the sites...which looked an awful lot like pictures he had seen of his great grandad’s days that hung on Grampa Will’s living room wall....around the 1860s.....But there was something odd about what he was seeing.....something ghostly.....

Timothy climbed down from the flat car and approached a man strolling by with a pick-axe over his shoulder. He tried to talk to the miner but the man, though seeming to see Timothy just smiled and kept walking.

“Follow him.” Strebor Nod instructed. “He is going the same place we are.”

“He can see me....and I can see him but...why won’t he talk to me.’

“He is a ghost and you are a vision....”

“Ok....that’s not much of an explanation but if that is all you have I suppose it will do.” Timothy replied then settled in behind the ghostly miner and followed.

“How far is it?” Timothy asked but no answer came back. When he looked for Strebor Nod all he found was a ghostly image walking a few paces behind. It gave Timothy a little nervous shiver realizing he was alone.....alone among ghosts and relics from 150 years in the past all visible but not quite real.

He walked on for a couple of hundred yards, mostly up a slow climbing hill. When he reached the top he spied a group of mine openings and wondered which one was the Adit Strebor meant but when they drew nearer and the ghostly miner entered one Timothy guessed it was the one he wanted.....”Wanted. Do I really want this.....going down an old mine shaft by myself to.....to

where?” he started to second guess his decisions of the morning but at that very moment....no that very second a voice whirled in his head. “Go on boy....a great wonder awaits you.” It was Grampa Will’s voice.

Timothy took a deep breath and followed the ghostly miner into the mine shaft. The air...though warm outside cooled and Timothy slipped on the jacket he was warned to bring....Then just inside the entrance stood a perfectly sound mine cart sitting on shiney well maintained tracks. Inside it sat the ghostly miner who turned and beckoned with a wave of his hand for Timothy to get in.

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Now Strebor Nod was completely gone and the ghostly miner faded leaving Timothy alone as the mine cart eased forward....slowly at first then speeding up as the shaft turned a gentle grade downward. Gas lamps lit up ahead then flickered out as the cart passed them....and the shaft grew a little steeper and the car went faster.....down.....down.....down....into the bowls of the earth....And all along the way bits of gold fleck sparkled in the walls as the lamps flickered on and off.....On and on....down and down....it began to feel like the journey was going on forever....and the strangest thing....Timothy suddenly felt hungry....hungrier than he had ever felt before.....but there was something even stranger happening.

Strebor Nod appeared...full and solid.....”Well now Timothy Chyme. Look how you have grown. Soon you will come to Midway Village....a grown man.....I will see you there....but just long enough to set you on the path to adventure....your adventure.....”

Timothy was ready with a reply but before he could get it out Strebor Nod blinked out again. He looked himself over....his larger self...but not the clothes...they had torn to accommodate the larger body.....and.....a growth of beard...still soft but nonetheless the stubble a beard.

“But I am only eleven....not....geez...how old am I....?”

The cart...seemingly of its own accord began to slow as it came to a bend in the track then as it cleared the turn a cavern opened and was filled with sunlight...or at least it seemed like sun light.

Then...quite quickly the cart came to a stop where the track ended and a wide cobblestone road opened.

Timothy climbed from the cart and stepped on to the road to find Strebor Nod waiting for him holding a wooden framed back pack in one arm and clothing in the other. “I believe you’ll be needing these. You can go over there behind the livery to change.....there is a shack there if you require more privacy.” The old hobo instructed. “When you are ready come back and I will set you on your way.”

“On my way.....Where?”

Strebor Nod grinned...”All will be revealed in good time, but for now just go change your clothes.”

Timothy stared at the old hobo suspiciously for a few seconds then made his way to the shack behind the livery. When he returned Strebor was nowhere to be seen but the back pack was still there. A note was pinned to the canvas pouches. "Something urgent has come up. Go to the Inn on the other end of the village and take a room....there is a money pouch in the front right pouch of the pack. I will meet you there this evening....circumstances permitting."

Timothy followed the old hobo's instructions marvelling at the old pioneerish architecture of the buildings....some of which looked new....and...he delighted at seeing shops.....a butcher....a baker....and yes even a candlestick maker. There was a produce shop....a hatter.....general store and....well many of the shops we now find all crammed into box stores and super malls.

Most of the men sauntering about were dressed like miners....The women were in long dresses and kids clad in long pants with suspenders and cotton shirts...mostly brown and grey...not unlike what Strebor had given him to wear.....and laced work boots.

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Something about the Midway Village Inn looked familiar. In fact, having another look around Timothy had a sense of familiarity for the entire village.....as though he once belonged there....as though he was once a miner..... "But silly me...how could this be?,,Then again look at me.....I not eleven years old any more.....I must be.....uh....at least 20...or older....at least a man instead of a boy.....a child nearly....."

After a minute or two Timothy finally went inside and crossed the ornate lobby to the reception desk.

"Ah...Mr. Chyme....We have been waiting for you." The clerk announced cheerfully. Mr. Strebor Nod instructed us to watch out for you. We have a room ready and have collected all the things you will need for your journey."

"My journey. What journey? I thought this was...is...my journey!"

"Hmmm...Well....You will have to wait for Mr. Nod to explain any details.....In the meantime let's get you settled in. I am sure Mr. Nod will be along directly." Said the Clerk...then he rang the bell for...naturally....the Bell Boy....who was not a boy at all and seemed to be about Timothy's age...now....or older....

Timothy followed the Bell Boy up a long set of curving stairs to the second floor....down a dimly lit hallway to the last room on the right....which looked out over the street.

The room looked like one drawn out of the pioneer days....or earlier...especially with the canopied bed and the wash stand...oil lamps and windows that were not quite clear...

Timothy gave the Bell Boy a tip then went to the bed where he found all the gear a traveller might need on a long....very long journey.....spread out neatly over the covers....a traveller from a time before man had invented chemicals like gun powder....There was also a note.....another note from the old Hobo....Pack up kid....I have been side-tracked....you must set out at first

light tomorrow morning...I will meet you where the road enters the mine shaft again.....I hope....If not you must find your own way....Don't think about turning back....it is impossible....the only way out is to go forward...."

"That sucks." Timothy muttered miserably then with automatic obedience he placed all the gear on the bed in the back pack except for an array of archaic weapons that were firmly attached to a thick leather belt that fit surprisingly well around his waist. Timothy wondered how he would fare in sword fight...considering he had never even touched one in his 11....well...now....20 years.

After everything was packed Timothy decided to explore the village and find out everything he could about this strange left turn in reality he had walked into and if anyone had seen Strebor Nod or knew what had become of him.....No matter what the answers were Timothy guessed that he was going on this adventure/ journey alone.....He felt a certain anxiety but more so he was excited.....

More significant than most of his passing thoughts was those about his Grampa Will.....who had been here sometime in the past....but when he inquired about him no one seemed to recall having met or even heard of such a passerby.

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First light came with a loud bang as the room door crashed open letting in a howling, dusty wind that bore a resonant...disembodied voice. "Rise and shine....up and at'em kid. No time for sleeping the day away. Get a breakfast and be on your way."

Timothy vaulted from his bed and was dressed before he had a thought to wonder what....what....wonder anything. His heart beat in his chest like a drum and he could feel the rushing blood in his veins.

A knock came to the door..."Mr. Chyme. It is the time you asked to be wakened. A breakfast has been laid out and the sky is beginning to lighten with the dawn and a crow has cawed and no Mr. Nod has not arrived." It was the Bell Boys voice that came through the door....nothing like the one that had ripped him mercilessly from his sleep.....That was Strebor Nod's.

Timothy sat up....cleared the froginess from his throat and answered..."Thank you. I will be down directly." It was the best he could get his foggy mind to come up with. "It seems I am on my own." He pondered in a whisper. "But....."the rest of that thought got lost in his move to dress and get under way.

Down stairs in the dining room Timothy found his breakfast....just as he had ordered it....all laid out and still steaming hot....It took him no time to devour the eggs and bacon....toast and pan fried potatoes then wash them down with a glass of apple juice and a coffee....The sun was just rising when he strapped on his utility belt and heaved the back pack on to his shoulders and stepped out the door of the Inn to meet the day....

But there was no day to greet him....no village street...no Inn...no people....just the dimly lighted stretch of a mine shaft and the mine cart ready to carry him further along the journey...but to where....Timothy climbed into the cart and under its own power it set off along the shaft building speed as it went.....a speed that was actually quite alarming....especially on the curves and junctions....In fact it was very much like a roller coaster ride...

Timothy clung to the sides waiting for that sudden jolt when the cart flipped on a curve and left the tracks....but of course ...it never happened.

An hour.....another hour....at least that is how Timothy felt the time was flying.....but the truth was...it could have been days or weeks....or....yes...it might even be months.....and in the end...it was none....or all...and years as well....but as you will understand it was not just time passing...it was changes in reality....perspective....and yes....dimension.

It seemed endless....long enough that Timothy was not only feeling hungry and thirsty but....well....he felt a weariness envelope him and for a time he never was able to gauge he was unaware of anything in the conscious world....I put it that way because the sensation was not like sleep.....

Then....and finally....the cart began to slow and easy to a stop....Timothy awoke.....or should I say....returned to consciousness....

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And when he did he found himself on a rutted meadow road in the back of a horse drawn cart with a pig, a ewe two chickens and a dog who seemed to be watching over the other animals and keeping an eye and ear on Timothy. More importantly was the driver.

Timothy got quickly to his feet and scrambled to the drivers bench. “Strebor Nod.” It was a delightful bellow that burst past his lips. “I thought I had lost you or you had lost me forever.”

“Here Kid. Take the reins. You’ll need to know how to drive the cart. I won’t be here long. This is your adventure....not mine.”

“Ok...Ok, I got that....but answer me.....how did I get to be old....well...older.....”

“It’s just the nature of Majixland kid. If you wanna be a kid you have to be born here....but then kids here don’t get to have adventures and never get old enough to have adventures....Kids are always kids here....Kids who are immigrants transform into adults in order to be allowed and able to go on adventures.”

“It’s kind of confusing Mr. Nod...but I think I can see the scape of it. So what is my Adventure about?

Strebor Nod shrugged his shoulders. “Beats me Kid. You’ll know all about it as it unfolds....now pay attention.....the horse is drifting off the road. It wants to graze on the meadow grass....not be pulling your cart.....

The meadow was wide but Timothy could see a line of trees in the distance... “They must have been very tall” he thought.... And beyond that a massive stone wall with a dozen watch towers that he could see high upon a hill with steeples and spires rising above them. The rooves of the steeples and spires glimmered silver in the golden light of the sun and beyond majestic snow topped mountains rose against an azure sky. Timothy gazed upon the scene in awe of its wonder and beauty.

The morning passed to noon hour and then to a westering sun that announced the gradual transformation into evening. It was just as the sun took its stand on the western horizon when the two travellers came to a gate way. An arch read, "Welcome To Silverlode."

“Well kid. Looks like you got control of the horse and cart. Once you reach the Silverlode Market you can sell the animals....not the dog....the dog will stay with you. I suggest you trade the cart in for a kick chariot...which are smaller than transport or battle chariots and easier to handle.....or...get a saddle and learn to ride the horse. Pick the best for yourself....The less the better as they say.”

“You are leaving now....again....” Timothy replied...a little accusingly...

“Indeed I am.....As I said....This is your adventure....” Replied the old hobo and abruptly vanished. Timothy stared at the empty seat beside him for a moment then....with nothing else to be done or that could be done he urged the horse on...only to be stopped just as he was about to go through the gate way.

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The horse stopped and reared a little as two enormous Walkingsticks appeared carrying two blue capped gnomes bearing lances. “Who goes there?” Came a demand.

“My name is Timothy Chyme and I have come seeking adventure....or at least I was told I am on an adventure.”

“Where do you come from?”

“That is difficult to answer but recently I spent a day and night in the Mine Village of Midway.”

“Ah....It all makes sense. You are a Mundanite....and one who has....well....an imagination not many other Mundanites can understand.” A cheerful voice came back.

“I guess that is as good an explanation as any.” Timothy replied. “I am on my way to the market to sell my pig, ewe and chickens and trade my cart for a saddle and tack.”

“Then enter... Timothy Chyme... before the gate closes for the night. You do not want to be caught on the meadow by night.” A guardsman replied just as the first rattle of the gates closing came. Timothy urged the horse on.... passing through the gate just in the click of time.

The clip clop of the horse’s hooves sounded in the growing dark as they moved along the cobblestone road...a gnome on his walking stick on either side. Timothy was not sure if he was

being guided...which seemed unnecessary since the road seemed to be heading directly to town....or....if he was being herded to make sure he remained on the road....But where would he go....where could he go with thick forest cluttered with underbrush on either side of the road.

It was nearly dark when the forest gave way to open fields below the hill upon which stood the walled city of Silverlode. Timothy noticed then that the stones sparkled with silver and as they drew upon the gate he saw it was made of iron but garnished with silver leaf....that glimmered even in the dark and the dim light of torches....No electricity here....this was a step back in time even farther than Midway Village. This was....medieval.

And though Timothy marvelled at all his eyes perceived it was his thoughts that held him ransom for he had been wondering..... “Gnomes....and walkingsticks.....Have they grown to my size or have I shrunk to theirs....or is that an issue and in this dimension it’s all the same.”

These thought plagued him until he passed through the city gates and there his eyes were filled with sites that his mind was narrowly able to comprehend, but before he could take it all in the gnomes on their walkingsticks steered him toward a livery stable...just inside the gates. Once they came to a stop one of the gnomes said instructively. “The market opens at first light. You can get on with your business then. In the meantime settle here for the night...or leave your beasts and board in the care of the stable and find an Inn. You are free to wander and choose.”

Timothy thanked his escort....as he decided it was then moved his horse and cart into the stable and left them with the stable boy....with a silver coin that he found in the pouch attached to his utility belt.

When all was settled Timothy went to the street and with eyes as wide open as they could be he stared in awe at the city...almost every building made of stone flecked with silver and in the streets the walks were lined with dwarves....mining dwarves, and trolls of various sizes and ugliness....and humans though they were outnumbered four or five to one....and there were Fauns and Centaurs and fairies fluttering hither and thither...and the list of oddities of myth and lore grew longer than one’s arm.....as it is said.....

What truly caught Timothy’s eye was how the city grew up the hill ascending to a most magnificent palace of Onyx bound together with silver.....and garnished here and there and all about with gems of so many kinds Timothy was unable to name but a few.....like Jade, Sapphire, ruby and amber.....

And suddenly there came to the sky something so awe inspiring Timothy could do naught but stand there and stare.....

Now be sure not to miss...TIMOTHY CHYME IN MAJIXLAND....PART TWO....

